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The North Germanic place-name element *bec* in England, Normandy and Galicia

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Irene García Losquiño, Facultad de Filosofía y Letras I, Universidad de Alicante, Spain: The North Germanic place-name element *bec* in England, Normandy and Galicia.

Abstract

The place-name element *bec* is one of the most prolific components of Scandinavian toponyms in Normandy and England. *Bec* comes from ON *bekkr*, meaning ‘small stream’ or ‘rivulet’, and the element appears in compounds or as simplicia with suffixes and/or articles. Place-names with the element *bec* can also be found in Galicia, a region that experienced significant Scandinavian presence throughout the Viking Age. This paper evaluates whether the geographical distribution and etymology of the Galician place-names reflect the characteristics of *bec* toponyms in Normandy and England, or whether *bec* is a native place-name element from a pre-Roman root meaning ‘peak’.

Keywords: onomastics, toponyms, hydronyms, language contact, contact onomastics, settlement, Vikings, England, Normandy, Galicia, Scandinavia.

Introduction

In his work on Old Norse toponymy in the eastern part of Seine-Maritime Normandy, Ghislain Gaudefroy (2000) proposes that the study of onomastics is the only resource for an understanding of the Viking presence in the region, as there is no archaeological or documentary evidence that can provide such an understanding (Gaudefroy 2000, p. 210). In fact, the study of toponymy has provided us with a much deeper comprehension of the nature of the Viking presence in many areas of the Viking diaspora: the distribution of settlement,¹ the process of settlement itself, the impact on the local onomasticon, transfers into the local dialect, the diverse uses of each place-name element and so on. Most importantly, comparative analysis of place-name coinage and reuse in different regions, such as England and Normandy, provides meaningful insight into constant toponymic patterns in the diaspora.

¹ For instance, toponymic studies can now point to specific locations where early stages of settlement occurred, as their names contain the appellative *thuit/tuit* ‘assart’, ‘clearing’. For more on this, see Hansen 1998 and Fellows-Jensen 1985, pp. 348 ff.



Fig. 1. The location of Galicia within the Iberian Peninsula. TUBS / Wikimedia Commons / CC-BY-SA-3.0.

In the case of more southerly areas of Viking interaction, and specifically, for the purposes of this paper, in the Iberian Peninsula, all earlier research has been focused on collecting and analysing historical sources that mention Viking raids. There is as yet no archaeological record of Viking presence in Spain, with the exception of the small Mammen-Ringerike antler box held at the San Isidoro Basilica in León, which could be evidence of Viking contact, but not of long-term presence.² In the search for new information about the type of presence Vikings had in the Iberian Peninsula (other than the well-trodden raid chronology provided by most studies), approaches that have been successful in the study of other parts of the Viking diaspora could definitely be applied to regions of the peninsula.

In this paper, I shall examine the possibility of the existence of Scandinavian toponymy in Galicia, Spain, a region chosen for the constancy of

² For details about the San Isidoro box, see Roesdahl 2010 and Franco Valle 2016.

Viking contact and the wealth of microtoponymy that has survived, in written records or orally, to this day (Fig. 1). Galicia has a long history of presence of Germanic peoples. It was in the Roman province of *Gallaecia* that the kingdom of the Suevi was founded in AD 411. This same kingdom was then annexed to the Visigothic kingdom in AD 585.³ The presence of both Suevi and Visigoths in the area of concern to us has left a very visible imprint in the regional toponymy. Galicia has an abundance of Germanic (non-Scandinavian) anthroponym-based toponyms, though distinguishing whether they are of Suevian or Visigothic origin has not yet been possible.⁴ No potential Scandinavian personal names have made their way into the local toponymy so, in this paper, I will only deal with toponyms related to topographical features.

I will begin with an introduction to English and Norman Scandinavian toponymy, focusing on the repeated use of the place-name element *bec*, as it is one of the highest-frequency place-name elements in these areas of the diaspora and it represented a discernible topographical feature (flowing water). As *bec* is also a place-name element that can be found in very large numbers in Galicia, I will analyse this Galician corpus of names and compare it with the use of the element in Normandy and England. The place-name element *bec*, in Galicia, could also be claimed to be of pre-Roman origin, so I will examine the topographical features linked to its use in Galicia in order to explore the possibility that it is a Scandinavian toponym *bec*, related to small watercourses, and not a pre-Roman toponym.

The Scandinavian toponymy of England and Normandy

Regarding the Viking diaspora, England and Normandy are two of the areas in which the Vikings had the greatest historical and linguistic impact, leaving a significant imprint in their respective toponymic corpora. The beginning and end of the Viking Age in England are marked by the commencement of Viking attacks at the end of the eighth century and the Battle of Hastings in AD 1066. Most importantly, the establishment of the Danelaw (and other areas of Scandinavian presence that were not part of the Danelaw territory) in the ninth century gave rise to a direct and extended influence of Old Norse in the national onomasticon. In Normandy, the situation was not one of such last-

³ For an updated history of the kingdom of the Suevi, see Díaz 2011.

⁴ Often they are all treated as Visigothic, as in the most comprehensive work on the topic, Piel & Kremer 1976.

ing linguistic contact. In fact, ‘Old Norse was only spoken for a few generations after the treaty between the Viking leader Rollo and the Frankish king 911 [sic]’ (Sandnes 2017, p. 230). Despite this rapid integration with the Frankish population, the impact on the Norman onomasticon was also quite significant (Renaud 2008, p. 255).

Although Norman Viking Age toponymy has been collected and analysed for the last half-century, the study of this source material is not without problems. As Gaudefroy himself admits, the lack of medieval documentation for most of the names (common when dealing with microtoponymy) and the difficulty of differentiating between West Germanic and North Germanic elements in some of the place-names have hindered these studies (Gaudefroy 2000, pp. 210–211). However, while medieval documentation is not abundant, it is not non-existent, and the differentiation issues between West and North Germanic names only affect certain types of names, such as those compounded with personal names which could already be part of the local Germanic onomasticon. Much has been done with regard to English Scandinavian toponymy, and the corpus of literature on Norman Viking toponymy, if not as large, is also of great value. Particularly interesting for my purposes here is the research dealing with recurrent place-name elements, especially those formed by appellatives describing topographical features. Common-noun-based toponyms are especially interesting in an analysis of the degree of Viking habitation in a particular area, as the nouns in question are only retained in toponyms if they were frequently used by the local population (Lepelley 1993, p. 17). Examples of some of the highest-frequency elements that are a constant in England and Normandy are:

Names related to water features (in some cases still hydronyms), like *vic* (ON *vik* ‘bay’), *mar* (ON *marr* ‘sea’, ‘bay’),⁵ *crique* (ON *kriki* ‘bend’) or *bec* (ON *bekkr* ‘stream’, ‘rivulet’).

Settlement names, like those containing the element *tot* (ON *topt* ‘homestead’), *by* (ON *býr* ‘settlement’, ‘town’) in England and variations of *beuf/bo* in Normandy,⁶ and those with *thorpe* (ON *þorp* ‘small habitation’) in England and variants of *torp/tour* in Normandy. In these latter two cases, the *-by* names form the primary settlement structure, whereas *-thorpe* names indicate a ‘dependent

⁵ Although etymologically these two appellatives mean ‘bay’, in some areas of Normandy like Val de Saire they refer to a port. In the case of *mar*, as Lepelley points out, the name can refer to an inland pool of water, marshy terrain or an expanse of water along the coast. In the last of these types, the water is partially enclosed by rocks or reefs, but always with a clear passage from the sea. As Lepelley puts it, a *mar* ‘donne accès à la terre, comme un «vic», mais elle permet aussi à un certain nombre de bateaux de mouiller en sécurité’ (Lepelley 1993, p. 32).

⁶ The element *by* was used in England for tenth-century settlements (Fellows-Jensen 1986a, p. 626), previously inhabited by and claimed from Anglo-Saxon communities (Fellows-Jensen 1991, p. 350).

secondary settlement' in areas where there is previous Scandinavian presence (Fellows-Jensen 1986a, p. 634). Names containing *thwaite* in England and *tuit* in Normandy (ON *þveit* 'assart', 'clearing') also belong in this category and are probably the oldest of the settlement names (for more, see Hansen 1998).

Names related to landscape features, like names with the element *londe* (ON *lundr* 'grove') or *dal* (ON *dalr* 'valley').

Names for functional locations, like those containing *ting* (ON *þing* 'assembly').

The place-name element *bec* in the Viking diaspora

Although examples of most of these elements could have counterparts in Galicia, it is the element *bec* for which we find the highest number of instances.⁷ It is also an element that presents a very similar set of problems in Normandy and England to those encountered in Galicia, and thus it will be our focus here and can serve as a case study for further comparative toponymic analyses of the diaspora.

The Old Norse appellative *bekkr*, which is a common place-name element in Scandinavia meaning 'stream', 'rivulet', was transferred to various areas of the Viking diaspora in England (particularly in the Danelaw belt) and Normandy and became a prolific name formant. It initially designated small streams, but came to denote land close to the original stream.⁸ In England, the word also became integrated into the local dialects of the Danelaw territories and a great part of the northern regions of Britain (Mawer, p. 4). As a place-name element it spread with less intensity in Scotland, Shetland and the Isle of Man, where few instances can be found (Alvered 1995, p. 64).

In Normandy, the presence of the Vikings, especially in the northern part of the province, entailed a compact area of influence, traced by Lepelley as a 'Ligne de Tots', which demarcates those cantons with a large number of Scandinavian traces in their toponymy (Lepelley 2002, pp. 197–198). Within this line, the majority of areas with a high frequency of Scandinavian toponyms are no further than 40 km from the coast or a navigable river (Lepelley 2002, p. 199). In his list of 82 appellative elements that have transferred into Norman toponymy, *bec* occupies eighth place in terms of frequency, with more than 15 traces (but fewer than 20) identified by Lepelley. Much as in England, the

⁷ Further information about other place-name elements of potential Scandinavian origin in Galicia will be available in García Losquiño, forthcoming a: 'Scandinavian place-name elements in Galicia'.

⁸ A large number of instances of *bec* microtoponyms still denoting rivers can be found in Gaudetroy 2000, pp. 218–224.

word *bec* could also have been used in the Norman dialect, at least for a time. However, Zeth Alvered (1995, p. 64) suggests that this use was short-lived, potentially due to the competition from the already existing homonym *bec* ('beak', 'peak'), 'a Vulgar Latin loan from Gallic' (Alvered 1995, p. 66, my transl.). This meaning of *bec* as 'peak' could also be present in some place-names within Normandy, and in other cases *bec* from *bekkr* may be autochthonous, an example of later hybridisation (Alvered 1995, p. 66).

The word is present in other parts of the Viking diaspora as well, such as the Baltic area. In Finland and Estonia, as well as in Uppland in eastern Sweden, variations from ON *bekkr* in place-names are found to refer to a 'small body of water, pool of water' (Strandberg 2003, p. 196). This is an evolution from the older use of the element in the sense of 'brook' or 'small river'. However, its etymological derivation is from PIE **bhog-* 'flowing water', 'stream', PGmc **baki-/bakja-* (Pokorny 1959, p. 161). The meaning of *bäck* as 'still body of water' spread from eastern Sweden across the Baltic Sea (Strandberg 2003, p. 192). Other areas of Viking expansion experienced very little use of this element, as is the case in Iceland, where only one instance is recorded in *Landnámabók* (Fellows-Jensen 1986b, p. 66).

This prolific toponymic element is an evolution of PGmc **bakjaz* 'stream', which underwent *i*-umlaut in North Germanic (ON *bekkr*) and Ingvaemonic West Germanic (OS *beki*, OE *bece*), but retained the original middle vowel in the other West Germanic dialects (OHG *bah*) (Peeters 1972, p. 212). Old Norse was the only language in which it developed a double consonant. It has been suggested that, for the West Germanic instances of this word, the Proto-Germanic stem could actually be **baki* 'fliessendes wasser' (de Vries 1962, pp. 31–32). Linguists like de Vries and Kluge have thus disagreed about whether the ON *bekkr* and the West Germanic variants all come from the same Proto-Germanic root or from two different ones (de Vries 1962, p. 31, Kluge & Seebold 2011, p. 180). However, an origin in **bakjaz* accounts for the *i*-umlauts in Old Norse, Old English and Old Saxon, as well as for the gemination in Old Norse. In Old High German, the semivowel must have faded quite early, possibly in an auslaut process with the fading of *-az*, turning the semivowel into a full vocalic sound (**baki*, acting as an *i*-stem), which in Old High German could fade away in *i*-stems if preceded by long syllables, but also often when preceded by short syllables (Peeters 1972, p. 214). Therefore, an origin in **bakjaz* for all the variations, with an intermediary stage **baki* for the OHG evolution, is most satisfactory. In Gothic, we would encounter **bak-*, in the same way that PGmc **balgiz* 'bag made of skin' gave Goth. *balgs*, OHG *balg*, ON *belgr* and OE *belg* (Orel 2003, p. 33). Thus, only a North Germanic origin (amongst the Germanic languages) can account for the forms with *bec* in Galicia, as Old Norse is the only language ever present in this region whose evo-

lution from PGmc **bakjaz* shows *i*-mutation. As Krahe states, ‘Das Got. wurde von dieser Lautneigung überhaupt nicht mehr erreicht’ (Krahe & Meid 1969, p. 59), and, little as we know of the Suevian language, it belonged within the Irmionic (or Elbe) Germanic group of dialects (Robinson 1992, p. 222), which, as noted before, retained the middle vowel *a*.

Bec names in England and Normandy: morphology and instances

English place-names with *bec* may be compounds with *bec* as their first or second element, although it is more common as the second element.⁹ *Bec* may combine with descriptors (e.g. *Caldbeck* ‘cold stream’), a word for a topographical feature (as in *Beckermonds*), a personal name (e.g. *Kettlebeck*), settlement names/human presence names (e.g. *Kirk Beck*, *Thornthwaite Beck*), and nature names including animal designations of Old English, Celtic or Old Norse origin (e.g. *Blackshaw Beck*, *Gedbecke*). It often appears as the second element in names with two detached parts (like *Dalby Beck*). Finally, *bec* also appears as a separate element in *Barnoldby le Beck* (Smith 1956, p. 26).¹⁰ Because the word became integrated into the language to denote streams, its appearance as an independent name element for rivers or habitations is not necessarily contemporary with names recorded during the Viking Age or within the following century, and could in fact in some cases have been incorporated in native English names coined at a later date (Kousgård Sørensen 1968, p. 21). In other cases, the toponym was formed from the Old English word *bece*, though with the phonological influence of Old Norse voiceless velar plosive /k/ (Fellows-Jensen 1986b, p. 60).

Bec names in Normandy often appear as simplex names with an article (plural or singular) and sometimes a diminutive suffix (e.g. *Le Bec* or *Le Becquet*). In all other instances, much as in England, the element appears combined with a Scandinavian descriptor (describing the colour, length, temperature, depth etc. of the stream, as in *Caldebec* ‘cold stream’), preceded by another appellative pointing to a topographical feature of the landscape (e.g. *Crabec* ‘the stream of the nook’), or preceded by an anthroponym,¹¹ as in *Annebecq*. These elements of the compounds may be of Old Norse, Latin, Celtic or Romance origin. When in compounds, *bec* occupies final position. It

⁹ Some lost instances of *bec* in initial position are *Becfarlam* and *Beksonderland* (Ekwall 1928, p. 29).

¹⁰ For more on this place-name, see footnote 16.

¹¹ For a full account of toponym classification in Normandy, see Renaud 1989, pp. 157–160.

is only in names derived from an earlier simplex accompanied by a specifier that *bec* appears in initial position, as in *Le Bec-Thomas*, *Bec-de-Mortagne*, or the tautological *Le Becbécquet*.

In Normandy, the indigenous nature of the Scandinavian place-names produced a change in the physiognomy of the names very early on. For instance, the use of the feminine plural of the local Romance language is visible in many toponyms of Viking areas, as in *Boos* (from an older *Bothes*), *Tôtes* or *Ecalles*;¹² so too is the combination with a Romance adjective, as in *Belbeuf* (de Beaurepaire 2002, p. 52). Most important in a comparison with the situation in Galicia is that, as has traditionally been presumed, this process of romanisation of Scandinavian place-names could also include the full integration of place-name elements in the language as appellatives, which can be seen especially in microtoponymy from the use of a preceding article and/or the addition of suffixes.¹³ These names continued to be used after the Viking Age, and in some cases travelled to other parts of France. This does not necessarily mean that the Normanisation and normalisation of such elements occurred after the Viking Age. In fact, there is plenty of evidence of *bec* being used as a (semantically) independent formant as early as the mid eleventh century. Recorded examples are, for instance, *Clarbec* (documented as *Claro Becco* in 1061) (Nègre 1991, p. 1012) and *Bec de Mortagne* (*de Becco* in 1089–91) (Nègre 1991, p. 1011). The element was already used in its simplex form in the eleventh century to name flowing water, as shown in a record for *Le Bec* (Eure): ‘a rivo illic manantis Beccus appellatur’ (Nègre 1991, p. 1011), or several for *Le Bec-Hellouin* (Eure): ‘*Beccensis ecclesia*’ in 1041 (de Beaurepaire 1981, p. 62), as *Becco* (ablative) in 1049–66, and as *Becci* (genitive) in 1066 (Adigard des Gautries 1954, p. 49).

Either as a simplex or compounded, the element *bec* is quite distinctive in Normandy and England as one that has not changed form from its Old Norse origin. This is not the case with some of the other common Scandinavian place-names in England and Normandy, as names derived, for instance, from ON *buð* ‘booth’ or *holmr* ‘island’ have evolved into many variants (Hansen 1998, p. 258). In contrast, *bec* names in these two areas exhibit minimal variation in the rendering of the element *bec*. In England, instances of early forms often differ very little from the current forms. Examples are *Alrebec* (AD 1088) for current *Ellerbeck* (Fellows-Jensen 1972, p. 93) or *Iselbec* (AD 1086) for *Isle Beck* (Smith 1928, p. 183). In Normandy, spellings of the ele-

¹² A name related to ON *skáli* ‘temporary shelter’ (Gaudefroy 2000, p. 233).

¹³ This is not, however, an unchallengeable presumption, as toponymy is the only evidence for such inclusion of the name in the local lexicon. As developed below, the presence of the article/suffixes and the high frequency of such place-names may be the result of early adaptation and a later process of replication of the already adapted name.

ment only vary from *bec* to *becq*, with diminutive and plural endings. In the area north of the river Loire and south of La Vilaine, in the department of Loire-Atlantique, we encounter one instance of a different form of the simplex toponym in *Le Beco*. This ending in *-o* is also found in two other nearby Scandinavian toponyms, north of the river La Vilaine: *Bodo* and *Le Bodo*, also rare in containing this ending.¹⁴

Regarding the two common spellings of *bec* names in Normandy, with the name (or element of the compound) rendered *bec* or *becque*, Gaudefroy considers that these two versions issue from different Germanic origins. While *bec* is derived from ON *bekkr*, Gaudefroy considers that *becque* names are West Germanic (Istvaeonic), stemming from the Flemish areas of France and Belgium (Gaudefroy 2000, p. 211). He reaches this conclusion from the presence of such a name in Belgium, as its presence in France is rare and it mostly appears near the border with Belgium. In these cases, *Becque* is a simplex denoting a stream. In Normandy, however, or following the course of the Garonne to Toulouse, instances of *bec* as a simplex *Becque* do not occur as such. Names with the orthography <cq> are diminutives in *-et*, where <q> has been forced by the presence of the medial vowel. These diminutive names interact closely with *bec* names and are also of Scandinavian origin. In compounds, *Becque* does appear as a first element without the diminutive suffix to justify the orthography. This is the case with *Becquelongde*, a name in St-Vaast-d'Equieville, or *Becquelongde*, a forest near Fécamp (Gaudefroy 2000, p. 224). Here *becque* is of clear Scandinavian origin, as it is compounded with another Scandinavian element, *lundr* 'grove', and other variants with *bec* like *Beclondes* (Eure) exist in Normandy.

Thus, while a Franconian origin can account for the *Becque* hydronyms in Belgium and French areas near Belgium (as in the case of *Becque de Marq* in Roubaix),¹⁵ elsewhere in France examples of West Germanic stream names do not exhibit such a spelling (e.g. the hydronym *Rebac* and town name *Rebais* in Seine-et-Marne), except as diminutives and initial-position formants of compounds. These latter variants of the toponym are better explained as Scandinavian.

¹⁴ *Bodo* is assumed by Lepelley 2002, p. 211, to be a Scandinavian personal name, as the base of the place-name *Bondeville*. However, this personal name is understood elsewhere to be Frankish (Adigard des Gautries & Lechanteur 1963, p. 5). I have found no literature on the place-names *Bodo*, *Le Bodo* and *Le Beco*, which I here propose could possibly be renderings of common Scandinavian place-names which, in the case of *Le Bodo* and *Bodo*, have retained the dental consonant present in some eleventh-century renderings of *buð*-derived names like *Boos* (*Bodes* in AD 1030–50; Adigard des Gautries & Lechanteur 1963, p. 7). The *-o* ending, not found in any other instance of names with *bec* or derived from *buð*, could be a local development, as these three names are located in southern Brittany, where other names with the same ending (from Breton) abound.

¹⁵ These names can also evolve into *-bais* or *-baix* (Gaudefroy 2000, p. 211).

The character of the Viking toponymic impact on Normandy, when compared with that found in the British Isles, shows that there are strong similarities in the way these different parts of the diaspora were settled. As Gillian Fellows-Jensen has described:

In both countries the Vikings adopted some names, adapted others and abandoned yet a third group of names. In both countries the Vikings took over flourishing settlements, established new settlements on deserted sites and reclaimed hitherto vacant land. In both countries some of the new names they coined described the sites or functions of settlements, while the most important function of many of the names would seem to have been to mark private ownership. (Fellows-Jensen 1979, p. 23)

Despite the truth of this statement, there are also significant differences. While compounded names are indeed quite similar and fall within the same morphological categories in both areas, Normandy has a very large corpus of simplex names that England does not have. This corpus, as we have seen, contains names that have been adapted grammatically and often have definite articles and endings (plural, diminutive, or both). In many cases they appear in hyphenated compounds that stem from an original simplex, as in *Le Bec-Hellouin*. While the frequency of this category of names, which is therefore unique to Normandy,¹⁶ has often been attributed to the fact that *bec* – together with other elements that also appear in simplicia, like *tot*, *torp*, *dal* or *lund* – was adopted into the regional language for a time, this is not evidenced in written sources. Towards the end of the article, after I have discussed the appearance of a large number of similar names in Galicia, this supposition will be revisited.

Bec names in Galicia

Bec mostly appears in simplex names in Galicia, with the highest percentage of occurrences as two articulated forms: *O Beco* or *O Beque* (and plural variations of these simplex forms). If Scandinavian in origin, these two forms could correspond to the Norman variation of *bec/becquet*, especially the form *Le Beco* and the diminutive *Les Becquets*. There are, to date, fifty-seven identified instances of variations of *O Beco*, *O Beque* and *Beca* as simplex forms (five of these are plurals), but this number is expected to grow with the ongoing compilation of Galician microtoponyms being carried out by the Proxecto To-

¹⁶ In England, the example of *Barnoldby le Beck* is a later coinage. In fact, in the Domesday Book it appears only as *Bernulfbi*, and similarly in AD 1115 and 1202. *Le Beck* is added to distinguish it from *Barnetby le Wold* (Ekwall 1960, p. 27). This is the case with all English toponyms with *le*, such as *Thorpe le Willows* or *Thornton le Beans*.

ponimia de Galicia (PTG).¹⁷ There are also twelve names composed of a simplex *Beco/Beque* plus a non-conjoined appellative with specifics relating to an original simplex *Beco*: referring to its situation relative to another *Beco* or a topographical feature (*O Beco de Arriba* ‘the upper Beco’), its connection to another topographical or man-made feature (*O Lavadoiro do Beque* ‘the washing place of Beco’, *Os Herbales do Beco* ‘the meadow of Beco’), or its size relative to another *Beco* (*O Beco Pequeno* ‘the small Beco’). Finally, there are five compound toponyms with the element *bec*, which will be discussed below.

Names with *bec* in Galicia have not often been etymologised, but have been connected, in the same way as the Galician toponym *Bico*, to a Proto-Celtic form meaning ‘peak’. Previous research has understood Proto-Celtic variants **becc*, **bicc* and **picc* to have the same meanings of ‘peak of a mountain’ and ‘bird’s beak’, which explains the use of the word in Galician for a series of related meanings, like ‘lips’ or ‘small triangular hoe’ (Rivas Quintas 1994, pp. 142–143). As a noun, *bico* is normally used to mean ‘kiss’ or ‘beak’ in modern Galician, but the semantics of the element *bico* in the existing place-names is always related to the meanings ‘highest point of a peaked object’ and ‘pointed extremity’ (*Diccionario de la Real Academia Galega*). Rivas Quintas considers several variants to belong within this same semantic group, including names containing variations of the elements *bico*, *pico*, *beco* and *beque* (Rivas Quintas 1994, pp. 142–143). All the different variants could potentially be related to the Proto-Celtic root **bek(k)o* (Latin *beccus*) ‘beak’ (Matasović 2009, p. 60). The same is proposed by Navaza to explain the toponyms *O Beco de Arriba*, *O Beco de Abaixo*, *O Beco do Medio* and *Os Herbales do Beco*, occurring in Catoira, A Coruña. He also relates these to the use of the toponym *Beco* in Portugal in the sense of a ‘short narrow backstreet’ (Navaza 2007, p. 102). He thinks it is semantically similar to the name *Cantiño* ‘small peak’, used to denote places in a corner where access is difficult. Navaza fails to consider, however, that none of the Catoira place-names refers to such a topographical feature: they are not on a peak, do not form a narrow passage, and are not within a place that is difficult to access.

Bico is a moderately prolific element that can convey a variety of meanings, though these are always related to the shape of a peak in land or water features. Regarding land features, it can represent an elevation in the terrain, but often the name is applied to projections of land into the sea or a ria (a long inlet formed by a drowned river valley), especially those with a pronounced angularity. Examples of this last type are *A Punta do Bico* (A Coruña), *Bico do*

¹⁷ The PTG is a collaborative venture between parts of the Galician government, local councils, heritage associations etc. to collect all the toponyms of Galicia.

Cabo (Pontevedra), and *O Cabo de Bicos* (Pontevedra), where the element is combined with ‘point’ or ‘cape’. As an element denoting an elevation in the terrain, *Bico* can specify a pointed elevation, like a rocky summit. In these cases, it is often combined with words meaning ‘stone’ or ‘point’, as in *Penadobico* (‘the rock of the peak’, A Coruña) or *A Pedra Bico* (‘the peak stone’, A Coruña). Other examples show *bico* as a semantically fully independent generic element meaning ‘peak’: *O Bico da Revolta* (‘the peak of the revolt’, A Coruña) or *O Bico do Castro* (‘the peak of the hill fort’, A Coruña). This semantic autonomy is especially reflected in simplex names with the article *O* (in the singular or plural) or the plural suffix *-s*, as in several instances of *O Bico*, *Os Bicos* or *Bicos*. Regarding water features, there are fewer examples. A toponym in Lugo, *Bico Agullón*, names a sharp bend in a river course, which in fact forms a hairpin bend surrounding a pointed area of land. A similar situation exists with *A Volta do Bico* (‘the turn of the Bico’, A Coruña), which refers to the pointed land area adjacent to a river bend. Thus, the relationship of this name element with watercourses is always linked to the effects of the curvature on the adjacent land. Much more prolific is the element *pico*, a synonym of *bico*, which invariably denotes a peak, and which is a common noun much more frequently used to refer to such features.

José Álvaro Porto Dapena has suggested that, in the instance of *O Beco*, the current name is due to incorrect fragmentation of a common pre-Roman Hispanic personal name *Oveco* (Porto Dapena 1985, p. 529). This process of ungluing part of the original toponym to form an article is indeed something that can be observed in Galician toponymy. Such is the case, for example, with *O Baño* from medieval *Ouana*, or *O Eixo* from the original *Olegio* (Boullón Agrelo 2011, p. 16). However, this explanation does not account for other variations of the name (like *O Beque*), for its suffixation to form plurals, or for its prolific occurrence, which suggests an origin as an appellative rather than an anthroponym. More importantly, the claim disregards the compounds with the element, like *Peibeques* and *Sobecos*.

Peibeques and *Sobecos* are amongst the five compounded names within the corpus available: *Os Sobecos* (A Coruña), *Sobeque*, *O Xabeco* (Ourense), *O Rabeco* (Pontevedra) and *Os Peibeques*. In the first case, *Os Sobecos*, one of the two instances where the toponym denotes a small town, the name is certainly composite: the prefix *So-* is common, meaning ‘over’. The same can be said of *Sobeque*, except that it is in the singular and contains no definite article. The other three instances require further attention to establish whether they are compound names of ON origin or simplex names of a different origin. Regarding *O Xabeco* (normative spelling, traditional spelling *O Xaveco*), the name could be of Arabic origin, cognate with Spanish *jabeque* and English *xebec*, which is a type of Mediterranean boat (*Oxford English Dictionary*). As

this noun has not been used as a toponym elsewhere in the peninsula, and *O Xabeco* is situated in a mountainous region far from the sea, it is likely that this is in fact a false etymology. Other options are that *O Xabeco* is related to the Portuguese word *xaveco* ‘to flirt’ or ‘to show immoral criminal conduct’, or even to the noun *xabeco*, meaning ‘packsaddle’ (Bron vocabulary), in the argot (called *Bron*) of coppersmiths from a parish of Asturias (Miranda) who used to travel around Galicia among other areas (Álvarez López 2005, p. 21). I believe that *O Xabeco* is therefore best left out of this corpus of potential Scandinavian names.

O Rabeco is the most interesting toponym for our purposes here, as it is the only compound place-name formed from two semantic elements. *O Rabeco* is also unique to the corpus in that it is a rare instance of a compound *bec* name in Galicia and has exact counterparts in other parts of the Viking diaspora. In Normandy, the toponym *Rabec* is found as the name of a village in southern Manche, within an area with a lower frequency of Scandinavian names. In England, the name also exists as a stream name with the form *Raisbeck*, which is ‘a corrupt form of the local name *Raybeck*, evidenced as *Rabec* ca. 1185’ (Janzén 1962, p. 235). The toponym can also be found as a variant, *Chemin des Rabèques*, on the Belgian frontier with Nord-Pas-de-Calais, just beside a waterbody and a small river called the *Ruisseau des Rabèques*. Versions of *Rabec* can be found extensively in all the Scandinavian countries. In Norway, in the area of Moss, *Rabekk* was the name given to a farm there after a small river that crossed its land. In Sweden, several locations share the name *Råbäck*, for example the manor of that name on the south-eastern shore of Lake Vänern or the village on the western shore of Lake Skagern. The settlement on Lake Vänern appears in documents as far back as 1347 (where it is recorded as *Rabek*) and all through the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries (and onwards) as *Rabäk*, *Rabech* and variations of these (Lundahl, SOSk 6, p. 60). In Old Danish, the name is attested as *Rabæc* (Lindkvist 1912, p. 189). As Harald Lindkvist suggests, two etymologies can account for the first component of the toponym. On the one hand, ON *rá* ‘roe deer’ is formally acceptable. However, an origin in the homonym *rá* ‘landmark’ or ‘boundary’ is preferable (Lindkvist 1912, p. 188). This last etymology is evident in several English place-names, where the element *rá* (PGmc **rahō* ‘pole’, Jepson 2011, p. 157) is compounded with topographical elements (such as *gil* ‘ravine’ in *Raygill Moss*, Jepson 2011, p. 163) or man-made features denoting boundaries (like *Ray Bridge*, Jepson 2011, p. 161). This is the case, for instance, with *Raybeck* (*Raisbeck*) in England, where the locality acts as a boundary between two parishes: Upleatham and Guisborough (Janzén 1962, p. 235). While *O Rabeco* is not at a particularly high elevation and is indeed close to flowing water, it is not situated on current parish boundaries, although it is difficult to say whether the place could have acted as some other form of boundary.

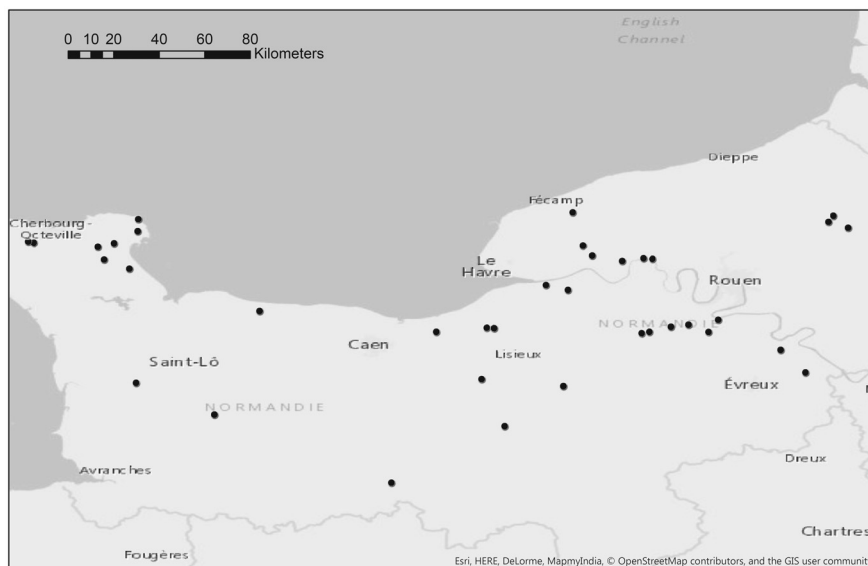


Fig. 2. Distribution of *bec* place-names in Normandy.

Regarding *Os Peibeques*, *Pei-* appears in other place-names throughout Galicia, and is in fact an evolution of the Latin *pelagus* ‘a deep pool in a river’ or ‘the deep bottom of a river’. Other forms from which this variant is derived appear in the place-names *Peago* and *Piago*, of which there are several instances in Galicia (Piel 1945, p. 323). Though the element *Pei-* could formally be derived from the personal name *Paio*, the existence of other *Pei-* names that appear on a riverbank, like *Peitorto* (Lugo) (*Apuntes de toponimia del concello de Viveiro*), suggests that in the case of *Peibeques* the appellative and not the personal name is behind the toponym. Thus, the combination of the elements *pei* and *beque* here does suggest a hydronym.

As mentioned above, within the current corpus of Galician microtoponyms, I have been able to identify seventy-five toponyms that contain the place-name element *bec*.¹⁸ The distribution of these place-names is not dissimilar to that in Normandy, as in Galicia they are also most abundant close to the coast,

¹⁸ All the microtoponyms of Galicia are currently being collected in a joint endeavour by the Toponymy Commission of the Galician government and local councils, working closely with heritage and neighbourhood associations. The Proxecto Toponimia de Galicia (PTG) has so far completed the collection, geolocalisation and digitalisation of all the habitative and non-habitative microtoponyms of a large portion of Galicia, with further areas to be analysed and digitalised in the years ahead. Further information on the PTG is available at <http://toponimia.xunta.es/gl/ProxectoToponimiaGalicia>.

and they cluster around the rias and follow the ensuing rivers on their way inland, much as they do around the Seine (Fig. 2). Also reminiscent of France is the existence of some (albeit much sparser) instances quite a way inland with the same morphological features as those along the coast.

The distribution of *bec* place-names

Looking at the distribution of Scandinavian place-names in Normandy, *bec* toponyms are particularly abundant in the departments of Eure and Seine-Maritime, as well as in Manche, mostly because these areas are in close connection to water features that proved fundamental for movement and access to the land during the period of Viking contact and settlement. More specifically, there are large numbers of Scandinavian place-names all along the course of the river Seine and on the Cotentin Peninsula, a point of connection between Normandy and the British Isles situated between the large bay of La Grande Crique (from ON *kriki*) and Mont Saint-Michel Bay.

The distribution pattern of *bec* names in Galicia is not dissimilar to that in Normandy. In the vast majority of cases, in Galicia the place-name element occurs as single instances or in small clusters near the large rias. Thus, we encounter an *O Beque* between the rias of Vigo and Pontevedra, five toponyms with the formant *Beco* (one of them the hydronym *Río de Beco*) by the mouth of the river Ulla on the Ría de Arousa,¹⁹ one *O Beque* by the Ría de Foz, one *Os Becos* by the Ría de Ribadeo, *Os Peibeques* near the Ría de Bertanzos and one *O Beco* by the Ría de Cedeira, although this last one could be considered as part of the cluster described below. Regarding inland instances of single occurrences, the toponym found furthest inland is an *O Beco* situated in the province of Lugo, near Portomarín. This instance is located along the course of the river Miño, which has its mouth on the frontier between Portugal and Galicia. The southernmost inland occurrence is an instance of *O Beco* in the south of the province of Orense, close to the border with Portugal. It is also interesting to mention in relation to this last toponym that it is located in close proximity to the banks of the river Limia, which crosses through Galicia and desembogues in Portugal in the town of Viana do Castelo, south of the mouth of the Miño river. Finally, another inland instance of *O Beque* is not far from the town of Arzúa in the prov-

¹⁹ The Ría de Arousa and the river Ulla that flows into it make up one of the most important areas of presence of Viking raiders during their period of contact with Galicia, as it is the only navigable means of access to Santiago de Compostela. Iria Flavia, halfway from the river mouth towards Santiago and the location of the Galician archdiocese during the first half of the ninth century, was sacked and its inhabitants moved to Santiago.

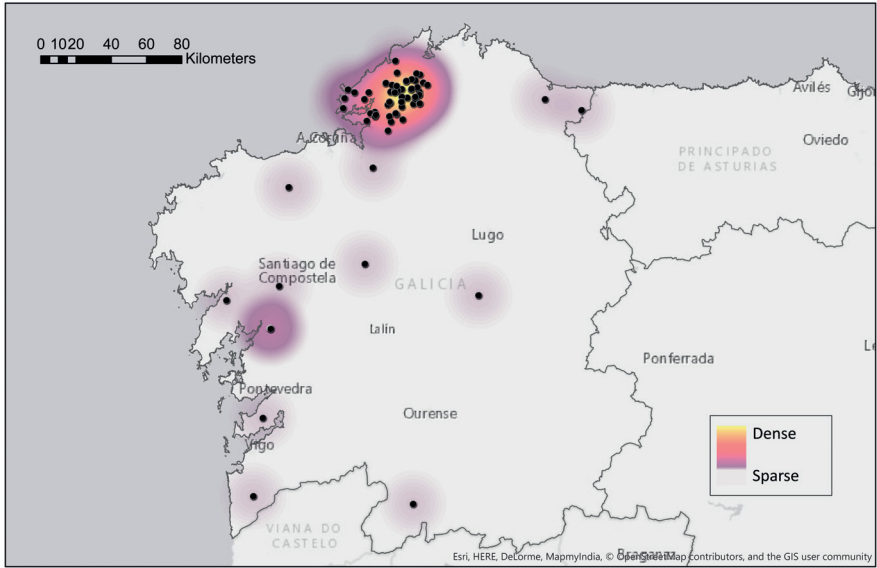


Fig. 3. Place-names with the element *bec* in Galicia.

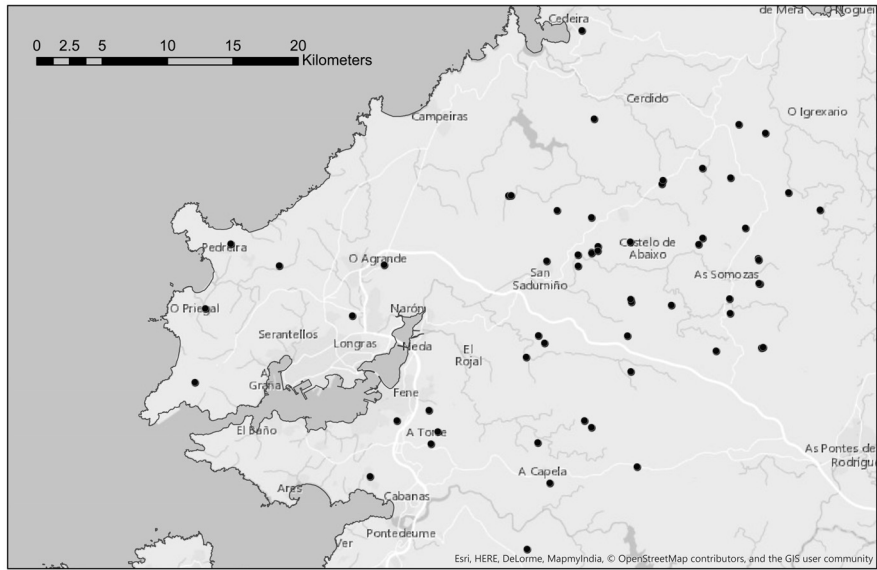


Fig. 4. Dense cluster of *bec* place-names in northern Galicia.

ince of A Coruña. The field it denotes is five kilometres north of the river Ulla.

As can be seen in Fig. 3, apart from the small clusters and single occurrences of place-names with the element *bec* in Galicia, there is one particular area with a significantly larger cluster. This small area, within the counties of Trasancos, Eume and Ortegal, contains a total of fifty-nine toponyms with this element. As Fig. 4 shows, this collection of names clusters between the rias of Ares, Ferrol and Cedeira, and spreads from the coast eastwards inland to the end of the municipality of As Somozas. This does not mean that no further place-names exist in the neighbouring region, but merely reflects the fact that the process of collection has not yet been finalised by the PTG.

Typologically, although all the names contain the same element, there is a division of the cluster between *bec* names with the form *beque* and those with the form *beco*. There is a dividing line that crosses the region from north-west to south-east, with *beco* names located to the north of it and *beque* names to the south, with a mixed area along the line itself. Interestingly, this line mostly coincides with the course of the river running from the municipality of Somozas and ending in the Ría de Ferrol, called the Río Grande de Xubia. It is along the course of this river that the highest concentrations of the toponym occur. In other cases within the larger cluster, the names are gathered around the courses of other significant rivers and their tributaries, like the Mera, Castro and Eume. Whether they occur close to a ria, or close to a major river or one of its tributaries, names of this type appear to be spatially distributed around significant water features, even when they are found inland. This in itself does not make them hydronyms, but it does explain their distribution. In particular, their connection to the rias speaks of a link between the people who coined the names and the sea.

Field data and etymological conclusions

However, the problem remains as to the etymology of this toponym. While in Normandy and England the name is related to streams and therefore is of Scandinavian origin, in Galicia the pre-existing pre-Roman root **bicc* could have developed into both the forms *beco* and *beque* collected here, as well as being present in the names containing *bic* which abound in Galicia and unequivocally name a peak, as discussed above. In order to establish the correct etymology for this set of names, only a physical inspection of the locality denoted by each one could determine whether the names are used to refer to mountain tops or peaked hills, and are therefore equivalent to names with *bic*, or whether they refer to streams and are an import from Scandinavian settlers.

If the latter, comparing their morphology with names in Normandy and England could shed further light on their origins.

Of the seventy-five names collected here, I visited forty-seven of the localities to which they refer during a field trip in August 2017. I had previously mapped each name and done preliminary research on the topographical features of each site, using both aerial imagery and lidar.²⁰ During the field trip, I took photographs of each location, wrote descriptions of the landscape, and talked to local inhabitants about the places denoted and the surrounding areas. This last approach proved very useful in most cases, as these local informants were able to provide a good deal of information about other *bec* locations previously unrecorded, changes in the landscape (including the complete disappearance of topographical features due to human action), and descriptions of the areas that could not easily be accessed. The initial aerial and lidar research suggested a lack of peaks in most areas with a *bec* element. This was confirmed upon visiting the locations, with a staggering 98 per cent of them definitely not situated on or by a peak. In fact, 85 per cent of the locations visited are clearly related to a stream or rivulet. In the vast majority of instances, these *bec* toponyms denote a field that meets a small body of flowing water or has a stream forming its boundary. In a few cases, the watercourse crosses the field, and in others it is, if not directly adjacent to the field, within a very short distance of it. Among these 85 per cent there are several instances of hydronyms, such as *Ponte do Beco* ('the bridge of Beco'), *Río de Beco* ('river of Beco', Fig. 5), *Lavadoiro do Beque* ('washing place of Beque') or *O Beco do Río* ('the Beco of the river'). None of these locations are on particularly high ground, and certainly none have any connection to a peak.

Of the remaining 15 per cent of places that cannot definitely be linked to streams, 2.1 per cent are toponyms quite likely related to flowing water, 4.3 per cent are potentially related to flowing water (within a short distance of a stream and not on a peak or even high ground), 6.4 per cent cannot be determined owing to recent extreme changes in the landscape (although none of these are on peaks either), and 2.1 per cent are possibly connected to a peak and not to water.

In summary, of the forty-seven place-names, only one instance (representing the 2.1 per cent) is possibly not related to flowing water but instead connected to a peak. It is interesting that this is the only feminine toponym, *Beca*, amongst the forty-seven (with only one other feminine in the corpus of unvisited names), and it is also one of the few habitative place-names in the cor-

²⁰ Lidar is a remote distance-measuring method that uses laser light to create 3D models of the targeted area.



Fig. 5. *Río de Beco*, near Coaxe and Catoira (Pontevedra, Galicia).

pus. Although Beca is not on a peak and is in fact crossed by a river, it lies at the bottom of a mountain topped by a hill fort, nowadays called *Castro Lupa-rio*. However, its traditional name used to be *Castro de Beca*. This is the only instance among the forty-seven visited of a *bec* name being related to a peak, and in fact Beca is situated by a place called *Picota* ('large peak') in the cadastre. I claim that this toponym is *possibly* (but not *certainly*) related to the peak, because the peak could have received the name of the adjacent village, Beca, rather than vice versa. This is a possibility reflected in the fact that the hill fort is also known by the names of other surrounding villages: *Castro de Francos* (referring to the adjacent village of Rúa de Francos) and *Castro de Faramello* (referring to the nearby Faramello) (Patrimonio galego).

While *bec* is a prolific place-name element in England and Normandy, its abundance in Galicia, in comparison with other potential Viking Age toponyms, is surprising. It is especially frequent in the areas of Trásancos, Eume and Ortegal, to the point that the *bec* place-names in this small area represent 78.7 per cent of the total corpus presented here. This frequency could be explained by a process of native replication, whereby an adapted toponym has been copied and reused over this particular area.²¹ This process of adaptation, or modification of the original place-name to conform to the phonological and grammatical rules of the recipient language, was undergone by this toponym in all the different parts of the diaspora. The process happened quite early on, as we can see from the appearance of the earlier-mentioned adapted forms in Normandy and England by the eleventh century, and it was probably one that could have occurred automatically at the time of the initial place-name loan, which is more likely if the source and recipient languages are quite different (Petrulevich 2014, p. 76).

In the case of Normandy, I mentioned above how not all the *bec* names necessarily had to originate in the Viking Age, as the ON *bekkr* had entered the local dialect and some of the names could be later (if not necessarily much later) descriptive names. Thus, the place-name element *bec* could have retained its full lexical meaning together with its referential function for an extended period of time in those places where the word had entered the language.²² In the case of Galicia, this is not a likely possibility, as we do not have any evidence for Old Norse influence on the local language. A process of non-semantic replication, whereby the name is propagated after losing its lexical meaning as an appellative, is not likely either, due to the topographical similarities amongst the place-names in the corpus. Would a place-name whose semantic charge as a noun has been diffused be used to such a large ex-

²¹ For a good definition of place-name adaptation, see Petrulevich 2016, pp. 56–60.

²² For a discussion on names, meaning and referential function, see Nyström 2016.

tent to denote the same type of geographical feature? A possibility here, as was the case in Normandy and England, is that the different place-names with the element *bec* were originally hydronyms, and that the name was then transferred, and further adapted, to denote fields adjacent or in proximity to the water source.²³ In this case, although *Beco/Beque* were no longer clear as appellatives (*beco/beque*) meaning ‘stream’, their denotatum had changed by metonymic transfer to fields close to rivulets, and the names were reused to a growing degree by analogical transfer.²⁴ Through analogical transfer, a name is reused to denote a particular topographical similarity to an ‘original’ name, which in this case could have been the already adapted *Beco/Beque*. While this could partly explain its abundance, a substantial presence of the people introducing the place-name is still necessary to account for its occurrence across Galicia and especially in the area of high frequency. It is interesting to note that the addition of the article is not an isolated Galician occurrence, but quite a common feature in Normandy as well, either in simplex names or in tautological (and perhaps epexegetic) compounds like *Le Becbéquet* or *Le Bebec*. These nouns have either retained the masculine gender of the original Norse word or, more likely, retained the masculine gender of the Latin adaptations of the name, like *Beccus* (medieval instances of the Latin masculine in Nègre 1991, p. 1011). The presence of the article in Normandy and the abundance of simplicia have been explained by the emergence of the word as a new formant in the local dialect. However, whether *bec* remained a name or began to be used as a common noun in Normandy is, in my opinion, uncertain. The large number of these articulated simplex names could indeed suggest that it became a popular appellative, as is the case with the hydronymic *cri(c)que*, from the Old Norse noun *kriki* (or the related *krikr* ‘bend’, ‘bay’) (de Vries 1962, p. 330), which became not only a place-name element, but a common noun in French which to this day retains the original meaning of ‘nook’ brought by the Scandinavian settlers (Cleasby & Vigfusson 1874, p. 355). However, the case of *bec* and other place-name elements such as *tot* is less clear, as there is no textual evidence of the appellative, nor does it survive today, and we rely on the articulated and suffixed forms of the name and their frequency to understand them as transferred appellatives.

After examining the examples in Galicia and suggesting that they may be a result not of incorporation of the appellative into the language, but rather of a process of replication, it seems pertinent to revisit the hypothesis that *bec* existed in the Norman language as a common noun. After all, there are other

²³ As an example, *Skirpenbeck* (‘dried-up stream’) in Yorkshire was originally a river name, although it now names the adjacent land (Fellows-Jensen 1972, p. 103).

²⁴ For a categorisation of place-name transfers, see Brink 1996.

instances of place-name elements acting as articulated simplicia in Normandy that were not part of the dialect, as is the case, for example, with *Le Tôl* (appearing under the same form at least eight times in Manche, as well as in other areas like Seine-Maritime), several instances of *Le Torpt* and *Le Torp* (Eure, Seine-Maritime and Calvados), and numerous instances of *La Londe*, *Les Londes* and diminutive versions of that name throughout Normandy and other areas of France like Dordogne. While there is textual and current lexical evidence of personal names and a large number of Old Norse words being integrated into Norman,²⁵ that is not the case with the place-name elements just mentioned.

Conclusion

In this article, I have reviewed the etymology, distribution, typologies and other characteristics of place-names containing the element *bec*, from ON *bekkr*, in two different parts of the Viking world, Normandy and England. This has been done to better understand a large selection of place-names with the element *bec* in Galicia, Spain, which had not been treated as a corpus before by onomasticians. The underlying problem with the *bec* names in Galicia is that they can be understood in two ways: as Celtic toponyms meaning ‘peak’, or as Old Norse toponyms meaning ‘stream’ or ‘rivulet’. This situation also existed in Normandy, although *bec* from Old Norse took over in the onomasticon and all the Norman names with *bec* are related to ON *bekkr*. In Galicia, it has previously been assumed in the scanty scholarship on the subject that these names would invariably be related to the Celtic etymon **bicc*. However, my mapping of and visits to these places and the topographical features predominant in the corpus suggest otherwise. Since the overwhelming majority of these place-names are not related to a peak, but rather to flowing water, it becomes a likely option that the names are in fact derived from ON *bekkr*. From our existing knowledge of the contact between the Vikings and Galicia, is it problematic to understand these names as Scandinavian?

In line with Dozy’s *Les Normands en l’Espagne* (Dozy 1860, pp. 271–390), most of what has been published regarding Viking contact with Spain has focused on accounts from medieval written sources (both from the Christian north and from Al-Andalus).²⁶ Because of this type of source material, and as I mention in the introduction, attention has mostly been paid to Viking raiding in the Iberian Peninsula, with very little mention made of other types of con-

²⁵ For examples see Renaud 2008.

²⁶ The most up-to-date publications are Christys 2015 and Morales Romero 2004.

tact. While no archaeological evidence of Viking settlement in Spain has yet been found, there is still onomastic evidence of it in Galicia, León and Portugal during the centuries of Viking presence. This evidence rests mostly on three place-name attestations in the Iberian Peninsula. They are variations of the same place-name, *Lordemanos*, which is in fact the word which the Christian authors of medieval Iberia used to refer to the Vikings (Price 2008, p. 465).²⁷ The only surviving instance in Spain, which is also the easternmost piece of evidence for Viking settlement, is the village of Lordemanos, in León, which I have elsewhere claimed to be a tenth-century settlement with a potential mercenary purpose (García Losquiño, forthcoming b). In Coimbra, Portugal, the neighbourhood of Lordemão uses the same toponym, and so did the ‘city of the Lodimanos’, which is mentioned in a charter from AD 966 as having existed, though no longer by that date, on the banks of the river Ulla (Christys 2015, p. 16). These toponyms form the only reliable evidence we have so far for settlement in Galicia and other parts of the peninsular north. That there would be further evidence of Viking settlement is hardly surprising, be it in the archaeological or the toponymic sphere, as the presence of these three names implies a geographical presence permanent and widespread enough to leave such traces. Nonetheless, the lack of any obvious Scandinavian place-name amongst the Galician habitation names had impeded a proper study of this question until the microtoponyms denoting other localities than habitations were collected by the PTG.²⁸

However, collecting, analysing and presenting these *bec* names as a corpus enables us to discover a series of features that suggest that these names could be further evidence for a longer-term Scandinavian presence in areas of Galicia. Firstly, the geographical distribution of the names is always related to a ria or a partially navigable river connected to a ria or to areas of sustained Viking attacks. Access to the sea seems to have been crucial for the population originally using these toponyms. Secondly, the vast majority of the visually inspected locations are not associated with peaks or even at particularly high elevations, but are most often linked to flowing waters. This makes it difficult to connect the names to the proposed Celtic root, and they are more easily understood within a North Germanic context. Thirdly, the names themselves are

²⁷ Vikings were referred to using variations of *Nordomanni* and *Lordomanni* in Galician, Leonese and French documents during the ninth, tenth and eleventh centuries.

²⁸ There is also a lack of obvious Scandinavian anthroponymic evidence in Galicia, while anthroponyms act as common elements of the toponymic corpus of other parts of the diaspora. Galicia is laden with Germanic anthroponyms, but these are often indistinguishable from specifically Scandinavian personal names. In Normandy, a similar situation often occurs, and Viking settlers may have modified their personal name tradition to fit in with the pre-existing Germanic anthroponymy of Normandy, from which the Scandinavian personal names become indistinguishable. For more on this, see Fellows-Jensen 1990, p. 153.

typologically very similar to names in Normandy, and in some cases formally identical (although grammatically adapted to Galician). This is quite a common feature of Viking diaspora toponymy, as toponymic trends can be seen running in parallel in different parts of the Viking world, and place-names from all around the British Isles show up in coastal Normandy, sometimes even pointing to the origins of the Viking group.²⁹

Adding weight to the evidence is the fact that – although this will be a subject of my upcoming research and therefore this is not the place to expound on it – *bec* is not the only place-name element of potential Scandinavian origin in Galicia, even if it is by far the most frequent. Other toponyms, containing elements such as *cric*, *ting*, *lund* and *dal* (potentially from ON *kriki* ‘bend’, *þing* ‘assembly’, *lundr* ‘grove’ and *dalr* ‘dale’), cluster in the same areas as the *bec* names and have similar distribution patterns, and an initial inspection suggests a potential relationship to Scandinavian counterparts in Normandy.

In conclusion, the toponymic tendencies of Normandy and England with regard to the element *bec* are reflected in Galicia. The geographical distribution of the *bec* toponyms in Galicia, the topographical features of the places they denote, and their resemblance to a large number of toponyms in Normandy and England, together with the pre-existing evidence for Viking settlement in Galicia and the north of the Iberian Peninsula more generally, suggest the possibility that these names were originally brought to Galicia by Scandinavian raiders and settlers during the Viking Age.

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²⁹ For examples, see Ridet 2000.

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Summary

The North Germanic place-name element *bec* in England, Normandy and Galicia

By Irene García Losquiño

This article investigates the North Germanic element *bec* in the toponymy of Normandy, England and Galicia. The paper starts by analysing the place-name element *bec* in two areas of the Viking diaspora: Normandy and England. It focuses on the etymology of this element, the geographical distribution of place-names that contain it and other characteristics of the *bec* toponyms that can be found in these two areas and in Scandinavia. Once the particularities of this place-name element have been presented, the article goes on to analyse its presence in another area of the Viking diaspora: Galicia. Although no Scandinavian place-names have previously been recorded there, the large quantity of place-names with an element *bec* which the author collected from this region (and the presence of other potentially Scandinavian elements in place-names throughout Galicia) prompts an investigation of the possibility of Scandinavian influence on Galician place-names. The place-name element *bec* in Galicia has previously (in the scant scholarship that has been published) been understood as coming from the pre-Roman root **bicc*, meaning 'peak'. In this paper, the author presents the results of a field trip undertaken to analyse the geographical characteristics of areas in Galicia denoted by *bec* place-names, in order to determine whether the names relate to streams or peaked hilltops. The overwhelming majority of these toponyms are indeed related to small watercourses, and only 2.1 per cent of the total corpus examined can be said to be most likely related to a peak. Thus, this article supports the suggestion that this type of name is derived from ON *bekkr* like its Norman and English counterparts. The distribution pattern of the place-names and their morphological features strongly resonate with those of Normandy, sometimes having exact counterparts, and thus the Galician *bec* names are proposed as part of a toponymic trend of the Viking diaspora.

Förkortningar

AN	=Afdeling for Navneforskning, Nordisk Forskningsinstitut, København	Lind	deltiden (1892–1934) =E. H. Lind, Norsk-isländska dopnamn ock fingerade namn från medeltiden (1905–15)
ANF	=Arkiv för nordisk filologi	Lind Bin.	=E. H. Lind, Norsk-isländska personbinamn från medeltiden (1920–21)
APhS	=Acta philologica Scandinavica	Lind Suppl.	=E. H. Lind, Norsk-isländska dopnamn ock fingerade namn från medeltiden. Supplementband (1931)
AS	=Anthroponymica Suecana	LMA	=Lantmåterimyndigheternas arkiv (i SRA)
bek	=beskrivning till ekonomisk karta	LSA	=Lantmåteristyrelsens arkiv (i SRA)
BK	=Bergens kalvskinn. Utg. av O.-J. Johannessen (2016)	LSB	=Linköpings stadsbibliotek: Stiftsbiblioteket
BNF	=Beiträge zur Namenforschung	LSBp	=pergamentsbrev i LSB
BSH	=C. G. Styffe, Bidrag till Skandinaviens historia ur utländska arkiver	LUB	=Lunds universitetsbibliotek
BØ	=Bustadnavn i Østfold	LUP	=L. Peterson, Lexikon över urnordiska personnamn (http://www.sprakochfolkminnen.se , 2004)
DAG	=Dialekt-, namn- och folkminnesarkivet i Göteborg	ml	=mantalslängd
db	=dombok	MM	=Maal og minne
DD	=Diplomatarium Danicum	NAU	=Namnarkivet i Uppsala
DDa1	=Diplomatarium Dalecarlicum	NE	=O. Rygh, Norske Elvenavne
DFU	=Dialekt- och folkminnesarkivet i Uppsala	NEn	=Nationalencyklopedin
DGP	=Danmarks gamle Personnavne	NG	=O. Rygh, Norske Gaardnavne
DI	=Diplomatarium Islandicum	NG Indl.	=O. Rygh, Norske Gaardnavne. Indledning
DMS	=Det medeltida Sverige	NK	=Nordisk kultur
DN	=Diplomatarium Norvegicum	NN	=Namn og nemne
DRA	=Rigsarkivet, København	NO	=Norsk ordbok
DRAp	=pergamentsbrev i DRA	NoB	=Namn och bygd
DRApp	=pappersbrev i DRA	NRA	=Riksarkivet, Oslo
DRB	=Danmarks Riges Breve	NRL	=L. Peterson, Nordiskt runnamnslexikon (2007)
DS	=Danmarks Stednavne	NSL	=Norsk stadnamnsleksikon. Red. av J. Sandnes & O. Stemshaug (4. utg., 1997)
DSt	=B. Jørgensen, Danske stednavne (3. udg., 2008)	OAU	=Ortnamnsarkivet i Uppsala, samlingar, NAU
DSÅ	=J. Kousgård Sørensen, Danske sø- og ånavne (1968–96)	OAUjb	=excerpter i OAU ur kameralt material i SRA
ek	=ekonomisk karta	ODS	=Ordbog over det danske Sprog
FMU	=Finlands medeltidsurkunder	OGB	=Ortnamnen i Göteborgs och Bohus län
FRA	=Riksarkivet, Helsingfors	or.	=original
G	=Generalstabens karta över Sverige, södra delen	OSDs	=samlingarna till Ordbok över Sveriges dialekter, Uppsala, DFU
gd	=gård	OUN	=Ortnamnsällskapet i Uppsala. Namnspalten i UNT
GFR	=Konung Gustaf den förstes registratur	OUÅ	=Ortnamnsällskapets i Uppsala årsskrift
glk	=geologisk karta	RAÄ	=Riksantikvarieämbetet, Stockholm
Gn	=Generalstabens karta över Sverige, norra delen	RB	=Biskop Eysteins Jordebog (Den røde Bog). Udg. ved H. J. Huitfeldt (1879)
hd	=härad	Rep	=Repertorium diplomaticum regni Danici mediævalis
hgd	=herrgård		
jb	=jordebok		
JHD	=Jämtlands och Härjedalens diplomatarium		
jr	=jordregister		
KA	=Kammararkivet (i SRA), Stockholm		
kb	=kyrkbok		
KB	=Kungliga biblioteket, Stockholm		
KL	=Kulturhistoriskt lexikon för nordisk medeltid		
KrA	=Krigsarkivet, Stockholm		
LB	=M. Lundgren, E. Brate & E. H. Lind, Svenska personnamn från me-		

RGa	=Reallexikon der germanischen Altertumskunde von Johannes Hoops. 2. Aufl.	SOL	=Svenskt ortnamnslexikon. Red.: M. Wahlberg (2 rev. uppl., 2016)
SAOB	=Ordbok över svenska språket utg. av Svenska Akademien	SOSk	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Skaraborgs län
SaoS	=Saga och sed	SOU	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Uppsala län
SAS	=Studia anthroponymica Scandinavica	SOV	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Värmlands län
SD	=Svenskt diplomatarium	SOVm	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Västmanlands län
SDa	=Diplomatarium Svecanum. Appendix. Acta pontificum Svecica	SOVn	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Västernorrlands län
SDns	=Svenskt diplomatarium [ny serie] från och med år 1401	SOÅ	=Sydsvenska ortnamnssällskapets årsskrift
Sdw	=K. F. Söderwall, Ordbok öfver svenska medeltids-språket (1884–1918)	SOÄ	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Älvsborgs län
Sdw Suppl.	=K. F. Söderwall, Ordbok över svenska medeltids-språket. Supplement (1925–73)	SOÖg	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Östergötlands län
skg	=skeppslag	SRA	=Riksarkivet, Stockholm
SkO	=Skånes ortnamn	SRAp	=pergamentsbrev i SRA
SMP	=Sveriges medeltida personnamn	SRApp	=pappersbrev i SRA
SMPs	=SMP:s samlingar, NAU	SRP	=Svenska riks-archivets pergamentsbrev
SMR	=Svenska medeltidsregister 1434–1441	SvLm	=Svenska landsmål och svenskt folkliv
sn	=socken	T	=Topografisk karta över Sverige (Terrängkartan)
SNF	=Studier i nordisk filologi	tg	=tingslag
SOB	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Blekinge län	tl	=tiondelängd
SOD	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Dalarnas län	u.d.	=utan datum
SOH	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Hallands län	u.o.	=utan ort
SOHä	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Hälsingland	UUB	=Uppsala universitetsbibliotek
SOJä	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Jämtlands län	UUBp	=pergamentsbrev i UUB
SOJö	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Jönköpings län	UUBpp	=pappersbrev i UUB
SOKa	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Kalmar län	u.å.	=utan år
SOKo	=Sveriges ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Kopparbergs län	vid.	=vidimation
		VJb	=Kong Valdemars Jordebog. Udg. ved S. Aakjær (1926–45)
		ÖNON	=Övre Norrlands ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Norrbottens län
		ÖNOV	=Övre Norrlands ortnamn. Ortnamnen i Västerbottens län